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**The Historical New Testament:** Being the Literature of the New Testament Arranged in the Order of its Literary Growth and according to the Dates of the Documents. A New Translation, edited with Prolegomena, Historical Tables, Critical Notes, and an Appendix. By JAMES MOFFATT, B.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901. Pp. 726. \$4.50.

A very ambitious and pretentious book this, spreading itself over nearly the whole New Testament field. The author states in the preface (p. xiii) that his design is to "arrange that selection of early Christian literature which is known as the 'New Testament' in the order of its literary growth, and at the same time to indicate the chief grounds upon which such an order may be determined or disputed." He says that, as far as he is aware, this scheme is "quite unique." He is then ignorant of the fact that this has been one of the chief problems of New Testament study for seventy-five years, and that there is a vast library of books which discuss this very subject. Every work on New Testament introduction attempts to recover the facts as to the origin and relations of the New Testament books. The only unique thing about Mr. Moffatt's work is the order of the New Testament books which he decides upon; for that he is entitled to the credit. It is as follows: 1 and 2 Thess., Gal., 1 and 2 Cor., Rom., Col., Philem., Eph., Phil., 1 Pet., Mark, Matt., Heb., Luke, Acts, Apoc.; then he crosses the line into the second century, and gives: John, 1, 2, and 3 John, 2 Tim., Tit., 1 Tim., Jas., Jude, 2 Pet. Mr. Moffatt's opinion on the true historical order of the rise of the New Testament books has a certain interest, proportionate to the amount of study he has given the subject. But everyone knows that the data are not at hand for ascertaining the true historical order, and that the only agreement reached by scholars is that the Pauline epistles preceded in time the present canonical gospels. It is of no particular use to publish the New Testament books in a conjectural order which would not in detail be accepted by anyone else, and on the general principle of which there is a radical dispute among scholars. It will hinder rather than help the historical study of the New Testament to put forth an individual theory of the literature as though it represented a consensus of scholarly opinion. We should not disturb the common order of the New Testament books (based in general upon the succession of events in Christian history, and upon the practical importance of the books) until greater agreement can be reached as to the "historical" order of them. Those who are far enough along in the study of the New Testament to deal

with the problem of the rise, environment, and relations of the New Testament books are beyond the need of having the books actually printed in the various conjectural orders.

The author furnishes an independent English translation of the New Testament. He says he intended to use the Revised Version of 1881, but, as that was not permitted him, he had to make one of his own. The translation has some good qualities, as all attempts to modernize the English Version have; but neither this nor any other modernization thus far appeals to one as more useful than the Revised Version. Mr. Moffatt's translation is marred by many infelicities, not a little poor English, and some misinterpretations. What is the use of substituting, throughout the New Testament, the "reign of God" for the "kingdom of God," and "community" for "church"?

In addition to the main matter of the book, the author generously contributes a large amount of other material also. There is a long section of 75 pages for which he found no English word suitable, and so adopted the Latin title "*Prolegomena*" which the Germans have naturalized; in this section he discusses the historical trustworthiness of the gospels, concluding that they contain a large subjective element from the apostolic age. Again, he sets out on separate pages, or in conspicuous positions, a large number of quotations from many scholars on various subjects; these have the appearance of "padding," but they increase the value of his book; he should have furnished the source of each quotation. Then in an "Appendix" (103 pages) he gives a collection of miscellaneous notes bearing generally upon problems of interpolation and compilation which did not fit into the main portion of the book, and belong properly to a commentary.

That Mr. Moffatt has diligently scanned a large amount of recent literature in the field of New Testament study is evident from the quotations and citations which he makes. This emptying of his notebooks upon his pages has swelled the volume to a great size and has produced an air of learning in the work. But one need not look far to see that he has not digested the material of his study; that he has not gone deeply and soberly into the problems of the New Testament at all. He rides jauntily over the field, swinging his lance this way and that, nodding patronizingly to scholars whose opinions please him, thrusting viciously at others, and toppling from their horses not a few of those who have bedecked the field of New Testament scholarship before him. The audacity with which, after his comparatively few years of study, he assumes to trample under foot the opinions and to

impugn the motives of the ripest and most eminent scholars, shows that he has yet to learn what true scholarship demands in the way of humility, reverence, sobriety, labor, and prolonged thought.

The chief value of Mr. Moffatt's book lies in the extensive survey which it gives of advanced criticism in the problems of New Testament introduction. It is not adapted to the needs of laymen or ministers, and can perform only a limited service to special students of the Bible.

C. W. V.

**Handbook to the Pentateuch. The Creation to the Deliverance from Egypt. Genesis I to Exodus XII, with Slight Omissions.**

By H. C. BATTERBURY. London: Rivingtons, 1901. Pp. xii + 293. 2s. 6d.

This is the first volume of Rivington's series of "Handbooks to the Bible and Prayer Book." This volume contains a brief introduction to the Pentateuch (4 pages), the text of Gen., chap. 1, to Exod., chap. 12, according to the Authorized Version, exegetical notes, lesson outlines, and suggestions to teachers. It is intended primarily for teachers of elementary Bible classes. There is great need for good works adapted to this grade of instruction, but the present volume is not one that can be heartily recommended. The author's point of view is indicated in such statements as: "Types of Christ and his work are to be found in almost every page; he is the Alpha and Omega of Genesis, the beginning and the end" (p. xi); and, "It contains in germ all theology; there is no Christian doctrine which is not to be found in it" (p. xii). The Pentateuch is regarded as the work of Moses, who made use of documents contemporaneous with the events they recorded in his narrative of the earlier history. The exegetical material of this work is derived in large part from such sources as the *Speaker's Commentary* and the commentaries of Bishop Wordsworth and Bishop Elliott. The author has made no use of the results of modern scholarship, save for an occasional reference to the works of Professor Sayce. The pedagogical suggestions are largely of the old hortatory sort, and contribute little toward the work of instruction in the facts of the stories of Genesis or in the teachings so effectively set forth in these stories. Moreover, it seems as though the large amount of space taken up by the Authorized Version of the text might have been more profitably utilized.

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